

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASH DC 3115

INFO US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 8059

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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3.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: COMMUNIST LABOR INITIATIVES: MEDITERRANEAN

REF: USEC 1533 (NOTAL) AND ROME 2659 (NOTAL)

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1. SUMMARY. THE MEDITERRANEAN METAL WORKERS CONFERENCE WAS CONDUCTED IN OBSCURITY FEBRUARY 22-23. THE PRIMARY INTENTION OF THE ORGANIZERS WAS TO DEVELOP A COMMON POLICY TO COMBAT THE MULTINATIONALS. THE PREDOMINANT SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, WAS EQUAL TREATMENT FOR FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE MAJOR EUROPEAN

COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CONFERENCE OF MEDITERRANEAN METAL WORKERS UNIONS, HELD IN ROME FEBRUARY 22-23, APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A LACKLUSTER AFFAIR. IN VIEW OF THE SLIM PRESS COVERAGE--THREE PAPERS, TWO OF THEM COMMUNIST--THE CONFERENCE PASSED VIRTUALLY UNNOTICED. THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF THE CHIEF SPONSOR OF THE CONFERENCE--THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED ITALIAN METAL WORKERS UNIONS FIOM-CGIL--WAS TO SEEK COLLECTIVE EXCORIATION OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. TRENTIN, IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE AND DURING THE SUBSEQUENT MEETING, ACCUSED THE MULTINATIONALS OF BOTH EXPLOITING CHEAP LABOR AND OF MONOPOLIZING TECHNOLOGY, THUS "STUNTING THE GROWTH" OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

3. WHILE THIS SUBJECT MAY HAVE HAD SOME ATTRACTION FOR THE MORE ARDENT IDEOLOGISTS AT THE CONFERENCE, MOST OF THE NON-EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS SEEMED MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN PURSUING REMEDIES FOR THEIR CO-NATIONAL WORKING IN EUROPE. SEVEAL ARAB SPOKESMEN RAISED THE ACCUSATION THAT FOREIGNERS EMPLOYED IN FRANCE AND WEST GERMANY, AND ITALY AS WELL, WERE TREATED AS SECOND CLASS LABORERS AND THAT THEIR ATTEMPTS TO SEEK TRADE UNION PROTECTION WERE USUALLY IN VAIN. THE FINAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTION DEALT WITH THIS SUBJECT, REPROVING ANY TENDENCY TO CREATE A "COMPETITION AMONG THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POOR" AND PLEDGING EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL WORKERS. HOW THIS WILL SQUARE WITH, SAY, PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR EEC WORKERS, A PRIVILEGE WHICH THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ITALIANS WORKING IN GERMANY ARE UNLIKELY TO RENOUNCE, WAS NOT ADDRESSED.

4. TWENTY-FOUR UNIONS WERE INVITED FROM NINETEEN "NATIONS": ALBANIA, ALGERIA, CYPRUS (2 UNIONS), EGYPT, FRANCE (2 UNIONS) GIBRALTAR, GREECE, LEBANON, LIBYA, MALTA, MOROCCO, THE PLO, SPAIN (3 UNIONS--USO, UGT AND THE COMISIONES OBRERAS), SYRIA, TURKEY, TUNISIA AND YUGOSLAVIA. OBSERVERS WERE INVITED FROM IRAQ AND PORTUGAL. EVIDENTLY NO INVITATION WAS EXTENDED TO ISRAEL. THOUGH INVITED, THERE WAS, SO FAR AS WE CAN ASCERTAIN, NO REPRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE FROM ALBANIA, LEBANON, MALTA, TUNISIA, MOROCCO OR THE SPANISH UGT.

5. COMMENT. WE ARE TOLD THE CONFERENCE GREW OUT OF

AN INITIATIVE IN 1975 BY THE ITALIAN FLM (THE ROOF
ORGANIZATION OF ITALY'S THREE METAL WORKERS UNIONS),
THE FRENCH FGM-CFDT AND FTM-CGT, TOGETHER WITH METAL
WORKER FEDERATIONS OF YUGOSLAVIA, EGYPT AND
ALGERIA. THERE HAVE, IN THE RECENT PAST, BEEN
SIMILAR MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCES OF AGRICULTURAL
AND CHEMICAL WORKERS UNIONS.BEAUDRY

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